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Is your **water**
safe to drink?



Consumer Confidence Report

2002
water
report

H₂O

This is your annual report on drinking water quality.

What Are Drinking Water Standards?

Under the authority of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), EPA sets standards for approximately 90 contaminants in drinking water. For each of these contaminants, EPA sets a legal limit, called a maximum contaminant level, or requires a certain treatment. Water suppliers may not provide water that doesn't meet these standards. Water that meets EPA standards is safe to drink.

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1999, is the main federal law that ensures the quality of Americans' drinking water. Under SDWA, EPA sets standards for drinking water quality and oversees the states, localities, and

water suppliers who implement those standards. The SDWA covers all public water systems with piped water for human consumption with at least 15 service connections or a system that regularly serves at least 25 individuals.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by simply calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (1-800-426-4791).

Notice: Important Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants

can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Water Facts:

There is the same amount of water on Earth as there was when the Earth was formed. The water from your faucet could contain molecules that dinosaurs drank.

Nearly 97% of the world's water is salty or otherwise undrinkable. Another 2% is locked in ice caps and glaciers. That leaves just 1% for all of humanity's needs—all its agricultural, residential, manufacturing, community, and personal needs.

The natural rotation of the Earth has been altered slightly by some 10 trillion tons of water stored in reservoirs over the past 40 years, according to a study at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

Four quarts of oil can cause an eight-acre oil slick if spilled or dumped down a storm sewer!

Once evaporated, a water molecule spends ten days in the air.

Water expands by 9% when it freezes. Frozen water (ice) is lighter than water, which is why ice floats in water.

Why do I need to read this?

A survey conducted by the American Water Works Research Foundation in 1993 found that nearly two-thirds of water consumers surveyed said they received "very little" or "no" information on the quality of their water. The water quality reports will increase the availability of information. Informed and involved citizens can be strong allies of water systems, large and small, as they take action on pressing problems. Also, an increase in public awareness can give sensitive sub-populations the information that they need to protect themselves.

Drinking water can come from either ground water sources (via wells) or surface water sources (such as rivers, lakes, and streams). Nationally, most water systems use a ground water source (80%), but most people (66%) are served by a water system that uses surface water. This is because large metropolitan areas tend to rely on surface water, whereas small and rural areas tend to rely on ground water. In addition, 10-20% of people have their own private well for drinking water.

Where can I get more information?

Information on water quality in your area is available from several sources, including your local public health department and your water supplier. You can determine whom to contact by checking your water bill or by calling your local town hall. You can also contact your state drinking water program or call EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. EPA has also prepared a citizen's guide to drinking water called "Water on Tap: A Consumer's Guide to the Nation's Drinking Water."

terminology



Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.